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## HISTORICAL NOTES

A LETTER TO CALVIN SPENCER, 1788

Addressed      Capt. Calvin Spencer,<sup>1</sup>  
Thompson Creek.

Honored by }  
W. T. Godfrey }

Georgetown, 29th December 1788.

Dear Sir:—

Myself and Family were well pleased to hear by Mr. Leigh on his return that Mrs. Spencer was safely delivered of a Daughter, (and that you with the rest of the Family were well,) on which occasion we heartily Congratulate you both.

It is with some degree of pleasure that I have now found an opportunity to inform you that Wilson who commanded in the British Cavalry while Georgetown<sup>2</sup> was Garrisoned by them is now here, and who if I recollect rightly took away your Horse, as well as took yourself & poor Shackelford prisoners at Mrs. Bonneaus<sup>3</sup>—the Fellow is apparently afraid of his Shadow, recollecting I suppose the many Mischiefs he did while here in his Command; he has been told of some, and as he has been Successful in

<sup>1</sup> According to Gregg (*Hist. Old Cheraws*, p. 106) William and Calvin Spencer came to the Pee Dee district from Conn. a few years before the Revolution. William settled in Anson Co., N. C.

Calvin Spencer lived first in Prince George's Parish; he a captain in Col. Huger's battallion, Contl. Army in Dec. 1777, when he resigned; he was then appointed Assistant Deputy Quartermaster General of the State of S. C. with rank of Captain (this *Magazine*, vol. VII, p. 77). He married 22. Aug. 1782, Rebecca, youngest daughter of George Ford of Prince George's Winyah; (*Ibid.*, vol XIV, p. 111.) They have left a number of descendants. An account of Spencer's capture is given in Gregg's *Old Cheraws*, page 463. He died in January, 1801; his widow married Thomas Powe, and died about 1844. Spencer moved to Chesterfield Dist. after his marriage; was Representative for St. Davids, 1784, 1786. Delegate to the conventions in 1788 and 1790. Col. of Chesterfield Regt. Militia in 1800.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown was garrisoned in 1780 by a detachment of British provincials (McCrary, 1775-1780, p. 562.)

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Bonneau was Mary Ford, a sister of Rebecca who md. Calvin Spencer; She married Peter Bonneau in 1767.

obtaining Administration on Baird's<sup>4</sup> Estate which he now Heirs, he purposes selling and carrying to Europe all he can get thereby, and to leave his wife only a bare Maintainance; (they are total enemies to each other) and Wilson has not a well wisher in this place but two—So that from these circumstances others as well as myself Suppose that by a Spirited Application either personal or by Letter from you immediately will so terrify him as will readily induce him to Comply with almost any request that may be made of him—The sooner this is done the Better—if it is possible you had better come down, if not write to him fully on the occasion the value of the Horse, and the mode of payment you would wish and send it to me and I would almost insure the success for a trifle.

Expecting to hear from you on this affair by the earliest opportunity I rest for the present.

There has been a Number of Deaths since you were here, in this place, say—Myers, Ballard, Cryer, Geo. Brown and Isaac Lesesne, the latter died a Deplorable Death—Drunk and by himself, with a pitcher of stout Grog at his back.

Having nothing farther to Communicate Betsey joins me in love to you all, and gives you the Compliments of the Approaching New Year.

I am Dear Sir

Your Most Obt. Hl. Serv.

Jacob Wm. Harvey.<sup>5</sup>

Richard Pearis or Pearce: commonly styled Paris, (whence Paris' Mountain, near Greenville, S. C.).<sup>6</sup> Born, Ireland, n.d.; settled, Frederic Co., Va., prior to 1750. Located, Long Island of Holston River, Indian trader, associated with Nathaniel, (afterwards General), Gist, 1754. A speaker of influence, an orator of

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Winifred Willson was administratrix of Archibald Baird's estate in Jan. 1784.

<sup>5</sup> Jacob William Harvey was the son of Benjamin Harvey 1722–1756, of Stono.

<sup>6</sup> Sources: Historical Commission Report on American MSS in Royal Institution of Great Britain, Carleton or Dorchester Papers; Dinwiddie Papers, Virginia Historical Publications; Gibbes Documentary History; American Archives; Logan's MSS Notes History Upper South Carolina; Loyalist Commission Reports Transcript, N. Y.; Drayton's Memoirs; Fanning's Narrative.

rude, savage eloquence and power, commended himself to Gov. Dinwiddie by loyalty and efficiency. Lieutenant, Va. Provincials, 1755. Commissioned Captain, 1756, to command company of Cherokees and Catawbias in the expedition against Shawnee Towns west of the Ohio, under Maj. Andw. Lewis. Commended. Served under Gens. Forbes, Stanwix, Monckton and Boquet, to end of French and Indian War; was first into Ft. Duquesne. Commended by Gen. Forbes; thanked by Lord Eglinton. Appointed Agent for Southern Indians. Served with effect on border of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, with headquarters at Ft. Pitt. Owing to great influence over the Cherokees, through his Indian wife, was ordered southward, where he might be "more centrally located to gather the Cherokees in event of an Indian outbreak;" and, in 1768, was located at the Big Canebrake, on Reedy River, headwaters of the Enoree, beyond the Indian Line, in So. Ca. Through his natural son by his Indian wife, secured an immense tract of land on the headwaters of the Enoree, 150,000 acres, at the Great Plains on Reedy River; where he conducted a large Indian station and trader's post, a center of great and wide-spreading influence among the Valley and Overhill Cherokees. Every effort was made by the Whigs, 1775, to secure him and the Indians to their interest or as neutrals. But, chagrined by the appointment of George McAlpine, (commonly styled Galphin), of Augusta, his rival in trade, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Congress, Southern Department, he took the King's part. As adjutant with Jo Robinson, Wm. Cunningham, Thos. Browne and Evan McLaurin, besieged Andrew Williamson at 96. Was taken at the battle of Big Canebrake, on Reedy, carried to Charles Town, and imprisoned nine months in irons in the common gaol. During incarceration his property and his trading-station were plundered and burned to the ground, his family deported, his cattle and stock used to feed Williamson's army on its famous march into the Indian country. Liberated, in the autumn of 1776, on taking an oath of neutrality, finding his property destroyed, his family deported, and his own life threatened, though protected for awhile by John Rutledge, Pearis, in company with Maj. Jo Robinson, Capt. John York, and Lieut. David Fanning, secretly raised 400 men to join the British in Florida; was betrayed, fled, on foot, through the wilderness, to Pensacola, 1777. Commissioned Cap-

tain, Light Horse Troop, Col. John Stewart's Corps West Florida Loyal Refugees, Jan., 1778. Operated with success about Mobile; reinforced St. Augustine against Howe's expedition; with Prevost invading Georgia; served defense of Savannah against French-American force; with Gen. Pattison at siege and reduction of Charles Town; commissioned Lt. Col. S. C. Provincials, by Sir H. Clinton, May 3, 1780; despatched to 96 District to raise and embody friends of government, with Innes and Balfour; served under Col. T. Browne defence of Ft. Cornwallis, Augusta; taken, at reduction by Pickens and Lee. His assassination attempted; was saved by Andw. Pickens, sent under safeguard to Savannah. Retired to East Florida, where his services were acknowledged in "extraordinary payment" by Sir Guy Carleton; died in the Island of Abaco, in much poverty, n.d.

Contributed by John Bennett.